

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5593
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY LOME
AMEMBASSY PARIS

S E C R E T RABAT 3202

EXDIS NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR MASS MOPS CG XA US FR
SUBJECT: PAN-AFRICAN PEACE-KEEPING FORCE IN SHABA

REF: PARIS 16648 (NOTAL)

1. WE ARE NOT YET PRIVY TO THE RESULTS OF PRESIDENT GISCARD'S MAY 26 CONVERSATION WITH THE PRESIDENT BUT IN VIEW OF WASHINGTON POST REPORTS OF REMARKS BY FRENCH FONMIN DEGUIRINGAUD, DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN CARTER'S MAY 30 REMARKS, AND REPORTED PARIS MEETING IN WHICH U.S. WILL PARTICIPATE, WE OFFER THE FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS SHOULD DECISIONS BE TAKEN TO ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT ANY PAN-AFRICAN PEACE-KEEPING FORCE.

2. MOROCCO, AS THE PROJECTED KEY TO SUCH A FORCE, IS CONSTRAINED BOTH BY THE NEED TO MAINTAIN SUBSTANTIAL FORCES

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IN MAURITANIA AND THE SAHARA REGION AND BY LIMITED TRANSPORT CAPABILITY AND EQUIPMENT. ALTHOUGH MOROCCO HAS PUBLICLY OFFERED TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ORGANIZATION AND TRANSPORTATION NEEDS OF SUCH A FORCE (RABAT 2980), MOROCCO WOULD CLEARLY HAVE DIFFICULTY FULFILLING THIS COMMITMENT. SHOULD U.S. SUPPORT OF THE FORCE BE DECIDED, A MOROCCAN REQUEST FOR U.S. ASSISTANCE IN TRANSPORTING EQUIPMENT AND

POSSIBLY PERSONNEL COULD WELL BE FORTHCOMING.

3. MOROCCO COULD ALSO BENEFIT SIGNIFICANTLY FROM A U.S. DECISION TO AUTHORIZE MOROCCAN USE OF FMS EQUIPMENT IN ZAIRE IN CONNECTION WITH A PAN-AFRICAN PEACE-KEEPING FORCE. SUCH A U.S. DECISION NOT ONLY WOULD CONTRIBUTE NEEDED MATERIAL HELP, BUT WOULD BE VIEWED AS ESSENTIAL MORAL SUPPORT, IN CONTRAST WITH OUR NEGATIVE POSITION ON THIS ISSUE IN CONNECTION WITH MOROCCO'S SHABA OPERATION LAST YEAR AND OUR UNFORTUNATE DEMARCHES ON C-130'S THIS YEAR (STATE 135709, RABAT 3153). IN ADDITION, SUCH A MOVE ON OUR PART WOULD HELP BUILD CONFIDENCE OF MOROCCAN LEADERSHIP (A) IN U.S. DETERMINATION TO FACE UP TO SOVIET EFFORTS TO DESTABILIZE AFRICA, AND (B) IN OUR RECOGNITION THAT MOROCCO IS ONCE AGAIN ASSUMING ITS RESPONSIBILITIES IN THIS REGARD.

4. THE USG, AS WELL AS MOROCCANS AND OTHER PARTICIPANTS IN SUCH A FORCE, WOULD OF COURSE HAVE TO JUDGE HOW PROMINENT AND VISIBLE ANY SUCH U.S. SUPPORTIVE ROLE SHOULD BE. IT OCCURS TO US THAT AN OFFER TO PROVIDE U.S. TRANSPORT COULD BE MADE IN CONJUNCTION WITH ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER WESTERN NATIONS AND PLACED IN AFRICAN CONTEXT BY HAVING IT CONVEYED TO OAU PRESIDENT BONGO OR TO AN AFRICAN REGIONAL GROUPING RATHER THAN DIRECTLY TO MOROCCO. AS FOR FMS, OUR AUTHORIZATION OF MOROCCAN USE OF US-FURNISHED EQUIPMENT IN ZAIRE IN AN AFRICAN PEACE-KEEPING CONTEXT SHOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO ALL

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EXCEPT THE RADICALS WHO FAVOR REORIENTATION OF ZAIRE, AND WOULD CERTAINLY BE WELCOMED BY GOM AND OTHER MODERATES WHO ARE URGING THE U.S. TO DO MORE IN AFRICA.

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